

October 11, 2001

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Dalton B. Floyd, Jr., Chairman
Commission on Higher Education

From: Ms. Susan Cole, Chair, and Members,
Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services

2000-2001 LIFE Scholarship Program

The Legislative Incentives for Future Excellence (LIFE) Scholarship was established by the General Assembly during the 1998 legislative session and was signed into law on Friday, June 19, 1998. The LIFE Scholarship Program is a merit-based scholarship designed to increase access to higher education, improve the employability of South Carolina's students, provide incentives for students to be better prepared for college, improve SAT scores, and encourage students to graduate from college on time.

During the 2000 legislative session, the General Assembly approved an increase to the LIFE Scholarship award amount. Students who attended a four-year public or independent institution received up to \$3,000, while students who attended a two-year public or independent institution received up to the cost of tuition and fees for thirty credit hours or its equivalent.

In order to qualify for the LIFE Scholarship for the 2000-2001 academic year, students were required to earn a 3.0 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale and earn a minimum score of 1050 on the SAT (22 ACT).

To renew or gain scholarship eligibility, the student was required to:

- 1) meet all general eligibility criteria;
- 2) enroll full-time (at least 12 credit hours);
- 3) enroll as a degree-seeking undergraduate student;
- 4) earn a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale by the end of the academic year (fall, spring, summer); and
- 5) earn an average of 30 credit hours each academic year (fall, spring, summer) equaling a minimum of 30 credit hours if a rising sophomore, 60 credit hours if a rising junior, or 90 credit hours if a rising senior.

As of September 4, 2001, the Commission on Higher Education awarded 17,269 students, totaling \$46.4 million for the 2000-2001 academic year. The following reports provide: the number of students awarded and the amount of funds dispersed; recipients by classification;

retention; ethnicity; first-time entering freshman by county of origin; and recipients by county of origin.

2000-2001 LIFE Scholarship Recipients and Funding by Institutional Type

(as of September 4, 2001)

Institution Type	Students	Funding
Senior Public	11,334	\$32,443,345
Two-Year Regional Campuses	427	\$858,049
Technical Colleges	1,852	\$2,200,348
Senior Private	3,578	\$10,401,335
Two-Year Private	78	\$535,467
Total	17,269	\$46,438,543

Fall 2000 LIFE Scholarship Recipients by Classification

(as of September 4, 2001)

Classification	Fall 2000	
	# of students	Percentage
Freshmen	5,528	33%
Sophomores	2,997	18%
Juniors	2,421	15%
Seniors	2,101	13%
Unknown	3,452	21%

Fall 2000 LIFE Scholarship Retention

(as of 5/30/01)

Students receiving the scholarship in fall 1999 retained the scholarship in fall 2000 at a rate of 61.1%. First-time entering freshman in fall 1999 retained the scholarship in fall 2000 at a rate of 45.0% as compared to sophomores, 79.1% and juniors, 80.3%. The lower retention rate among freshman is likely due to the unique college adjustment issues they confront. However, the retention rate has increased 1.5% since last year.

Institution	Retained at Same Institution			
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Total
Senior Public	44.1%	73.1%	77.3%	59.0%
Two-Year Regional of USC	30.1%	0	0	30.1%
Technical	16.5%	0	0	16.5%
Senior Private	50.2%	72.7%	84.1%	64.4%
Two-Year Private	29.3%	0	0	29.3%
Sub Total	41.6%	73.0%	78.9%	57.4%
Including students who transferred from originating institution to another institution in the State and retained LIFE. The Grand Total is:	45.0%	79.1%	80.3%	61.1%

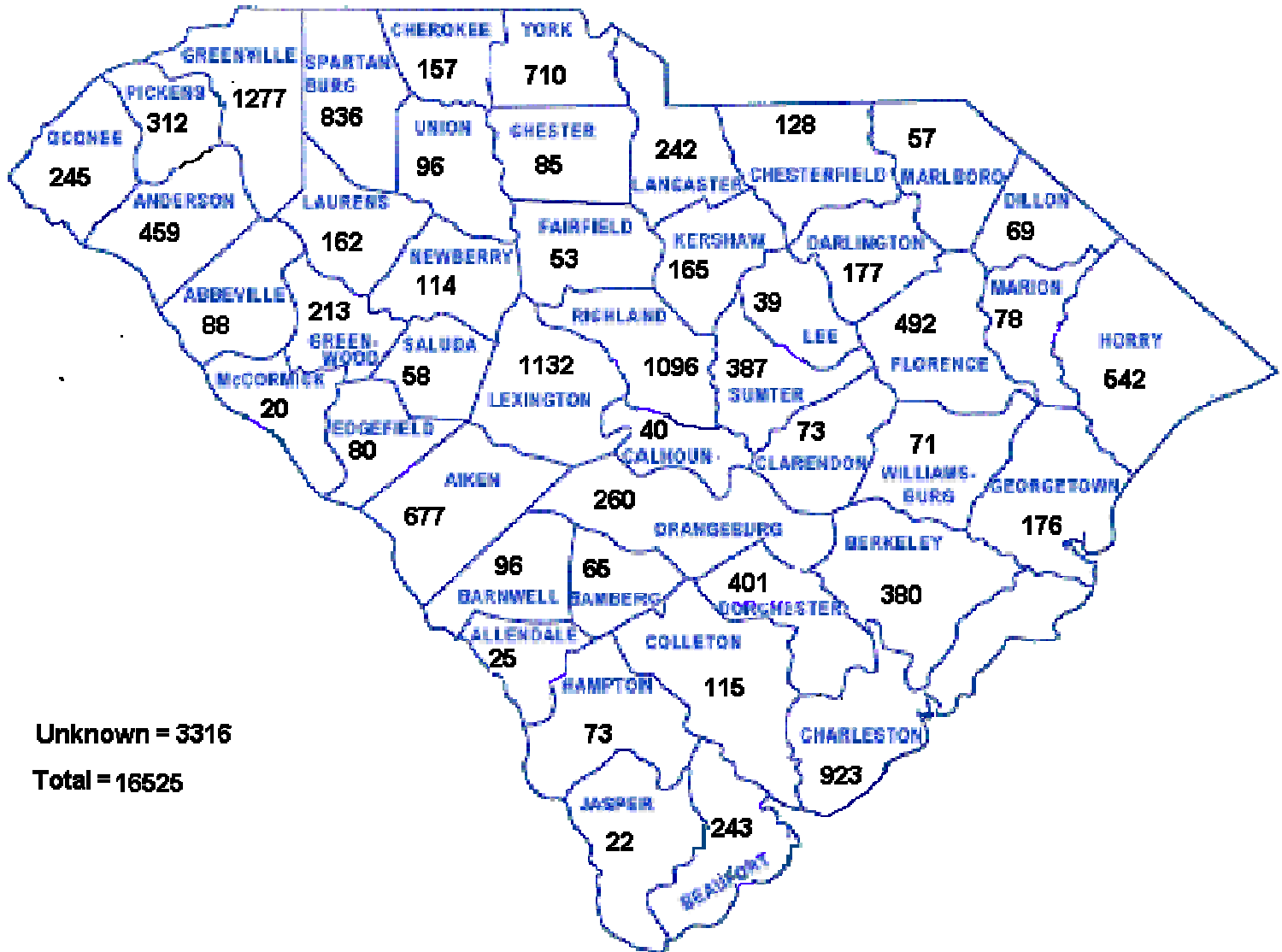
Fall 2000 LIFE Scholarship Recipients by Ethnicity

(as of 5/30/01)

Ethnicity	Students	Percentage
Black/African-American	1,931	11.69%
American Indian/Alaskan National	28	.17%
Asian/Pacific Island	301	1.82%
Hispanic	158	.96%

White/Non-Hispanic	13,491	81.64%
Unknown	616	3.72%

Fall 2000
LIFE Scholarship Recipients by County of Origin
(as of May 30, 2001)



Unknown = 3316

Total = 16525